

Complaints received by subject area	Benefits	Housing	Other	Planning & building control	Public finance	Transport and highways	Total
01/04/2006 - 31/03/2007	3	1	6	18	4	1	33
2005 / 2006	1	0	4	15	1	2	23
2004 / 2005	1	4	6	1	3	0	15

Note: these figures will include complaints that were made prematurely to the Ombudsman and which we referred back to the authority for consideration.

Decisions	MI reps	LS	M reps	NM reps	No mal	Omb disc	Outside jurisdiction	Premature complaints	Total excl premature	Total
01/04/2006 - 31/03/2007	0	7	0	0	11	1	4	9	23	32
2005 / 2006	0	2	0	0	6	1	3	6	12	18
2004 / 2005	1	4	0	0	8	0	0	6	13	19

See attached notes for an explanation of the headings in this table.

Average local authority response times 01/04/2006 to 31/03/2007

Types of authority	<= 28 days %	29 - 35 days %	>= 36 days %
District Councils	49.4	23.4	27.2
Unitary Authorities	28.2	37.0	34.8
Metropolitan Authorities	36.1	47.2	16.7
County Councils	44.1	32.4	23.5
London Boroughs	36.4	33.3	30.3
National Park Authorities	66.7	33.3	0.0

Response times	FIRST ENQUIRIES	
	No. of First Enquiries	Avg no. of days to respond
01/04/2006 - 31/03/2007	18	34.3
2005 / 2006	7	26.4
2004 / 2005	6	19.7

Notes to assist interpretation of the Commission's provisional local authority statistics

1. Local authority report

This information will form an integral part of the Annual Letter to your council, which the Ombudsman will send to you in June 2007. Again this year, the Annual Letter will be published on our website, at www.lgo.org.uk

The detailed information in the printouts is confidential.

2. Complaints received

This information shows the number of complaints received by the LGO, broken down by service area and in total within the periods given. These figures include complaints that are made prematurely to the LGO (see below for more explanation) and that we refer back to the council for consideration. The figures may include some complaints that we have received but where we have not yet contacted the council.

3. Decisions

This information records the number of decisions made by the LGO, broken down by outcome, within the periods given. **This number will not be the same as the number of complaints received**, because some complaints are made in one year and decided in the next. Below we set out a key explaining the outcome categories.

MI reps: where the LGO has concluded an investigation and issued a formal report finding maladministration causing injustice.

LS (local settlements): decisions by letter discontinuing our investigation because action has been agreed by the authority and accepted by the Ombudsman as a satisfactory outcome for the complainant.

MI reps: where the LGO has concluded an investigation and issued a formal report finding maladministration but causing no injustice to the complainant.

NI reps: where the LGO has concluded an investigation and issued a formal report finding no maladministration by the council.

No mal: decisions by letter discontinuing an investigation because we have found no, or insufficient, evidence of maladministration.

Omb disc: decisions by letter discontinuing an investigation in which we have exercised the Ombudsman's general discretion not to pursue the complaint. This can be for a variety of reasons, but the most common is that we have found no or insufficient injustice to warrant pursuing the matter further.

Outside jurisdiction: these are cases which were outside the Ombudsman's jurisdiction.

Premature complaints: decisions that the complaint is premature. The LGO does not normally consider a complaint unless a council has first had an opportunity to deal with that complaint itself. So if someone complains to the LGO without having taken the matter up with a council, the LGO

will usually refer it back to the council as a 'premature complaint' to see if the council can itself resolve the matter.

Total excl premature: all decisions excluding those where we referred the complaint back to the council as 'premature';

4. Response times

These figures record the average time the council takes to respond to our first enquiries on a complaint. We measure this in calendar days from the date we send our letter/fax/email to the date that we receive a substantive response from the council. The council's figures may differ somewhat, since they are likely to be recorded from the date the council receives our letter until the despatch of its response.

5. Average local authority response times 2006/07

This table gives comparative figures for average response times by authorities in England, by type of authority, within three time bands.

6. Categories of complaint

From 1 April 2007 we have amended our complaint category system, and you may notice some changes in the descriptions used in our decision letters and on the printouts attached.

The major change is that we now split social services cases between 'adult care services' and 'children and family services', in order that complaints relating to children and young people can be easily identified.

7. Complaints about personnel matters (employment and pensions)

We receive some complaints from members of council staff about personnel matters. These are usually outside our jurisdiction, and our practice is now to advise you that we have received the complaint without informing you of who made it.

For that reason, any such complaints on the attached printouts will show a blank space for the complainant's name.